



MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY

Giving thanks for families

Tuesday, November 22, 2005

Contact: Maureen Sorbet, Department of Human Services
(517) 373-7394
Marcia McBrien, Michigan Supreme Court Office of Public Information
(313) 300-2149

Third annual Michigan Adoption Day to be held Tuesday, November 22 Statewide event is largest Adoption Day in the nation

LANSING, Mich. - November 18, 2005 – Over 270 adoptions will be finalized and celebrated on the third Michigan Adoption Day, which will take place on Nov. 22.

More than 40 Michigan counties will participate, making the event the largest Adoption Day in the nation for the third year in a row. The annual event, which takes place on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, has as its theme “Giving thanks for families.”

Michigan Adoption Day is cosponsored by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Michigan Supreme Court, which founded the event to educate the public about the adoption process. In collaboration with local DHS offices and private adoption agencies, courts in participating counties will finalize adoptions and hold receptions for adoptive families. Other counties will participate in educational events about adoption and foster care. Governor Jennifer M. Granholm has proclaimed November to be Michigan Adoption Month and the Michigan Supreme Court has issued a resolution declaring that November 22 is Michigan Adoption Day.

“Adoptions represent one of the most important functions of government: connecting children with permanent, loving families,” said Granholm.

DHS director Marianne Udow said that Michigan Adoption Day “demonstrates that every child deserves a forever family. At same time, the adoptive families get enormous joy from opening their homes and their hearts to a special child. ”

Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Clifford W. Taylor said that, while Adoption Day is a celebration for adopted children and their families, “We must be mindful that there are many other children who still need permanent homes. For their sake we need many more ‘adoption days’ throughout the year.”

While DHS and state courts strive to reunite children with their birth parents, doing so is not always in the child's best interest. Courts may terminate parental rights in cases of child abuse and neglect. There are more than 4,000 children with parental rights terminated who are either waiting for their adoption to be finalized or waiting for a family. Most children who are waiting for a family are older, minorities, or members of sibling groups – which are the hardest to place. Youths in the foster care system need adoptive families so they do not leave the foster care system without a connection to a supportive adult and a permanent loving family.

Anyone interested in adopting a child should contact the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange at (800) 589-6273 or on the Internet at <http://www.mare.org>

For more information about Michigan Adoption Day visit these Web sites:

Michigan Supreme Court/Michigan Adoption Day:
<http://www.courts.michigan.gov/supremecourt/Press/MichiganAdoptionDayIndex.htm>

Michigan Department of Human Services: <http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>

National Adoption Day: <http://www.nationaladoptionday.org/2005/index.asp>

Please see the attachment for a list of counties participating in Adoption Day events.

Counties Participating in Michigan Adoption Day November 22, 2005

County	Event Location	Time	Court Contact	Additional Comments
Alcona	Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona Educational Service District Building 2118 US-23-South Alpena 49707	1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Jean Peirce (989) 354-7268	DHS Adoption Information Fair will be held Saturday November 19. Coverage area includes Alpena, Alpena, Iosco and Presque Isle counties.
Allegan	Allegan County Building 113 Chestnut Street Allegan 49010 Family Courtroom-Lower Level	1:30 p.m.	Joy Perricone Amy Cornell (269) 673-0532	Adoption finalization hearings and reception open to the public.
Alpena	Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona Educational Service District Building 2118 US-23-South Alpena 49707	1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Jean Peirce (989) 354-7268	DHS Adoption Information Fair will be held Saturday November 19. Coverage area includes Alpena, Alpena, Iosco and Presque Isle counties.
Bay	Bay County Courthouse 1230 Washington Avenue Courtroom 5 Bay City 48708	9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.	Marie DeWyse (989) 895-2479	Adoption finalization hearings open to the public.
Benzie	Benzie County Courthouse 448 Court Place Beulah 49617	10:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.	Tammy Bowers (231) 882-9671 Kimberly Ireton (231) 882-9675	Adoption finalization hearings closed to the public.
Calhoun	Calhoun County Building 315 West Green Street Marshall 49068	10:00 a.m.-noon	Karen Snyder (269) 969-6810	Supreme Court Justice Stephen J. Markman to attend. Adoption finalization hearings and reception open to the public.
Cass	Law and Courts Building 60296 M-62 Courtroom 1 Cassopolis 49031	3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.	Donna Dodd (269) 445-4454 ext. 2	Informational Open House and Reception. Adoption finalization hearings closed to the public.
Charlevoix	Charlevoix County Courthouse 301 State Street Charlevoix 49720	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	Cyndie Lieberman (231) 547-7214	Adoption finalization hearings closed to the public.
Clinton (joint event with Gratiot County)	Clinton County Courthouse 100 East State Street St. Johns 48879	2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	Jean Rayman (989) 224-5190 Carolyn Delavan (989) 224-5197	Adoption finalization hearings and reception open to the public.

County	Event Location	Time	Court Contact	Additional Comments
	in the Board of Commissioners Room on the second floor			
Emmet	Emmet County Courthouse 200 Division Street Petoskey 49770	10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Diana Harrold (231) 348-1763	Adoption finalization hearings closed to the public.
Genesee	Genesee County Courthouse 900 South Saginaw Street Room 506 Flint 48502	2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	James Bauer (810) 424-4426 Hon. Allen J. Nelson (810) 257-3550	Adoption finalization hearings and reception open to the public. Additional reception held Nov. 17 for families where adoptions were finalized in the past fiscal year.
Grand Traverse	400 Boardman Avenue Traverse City 49684	9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	Gaye Matta (231) 922-4643	Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth A. Weaver to attend. Adoption finalization hearings begin at 9:00 a.m. Adoption Day program begins at 11:45 a.m. Reception begins at noon. Adoption finalization hearings closed to the public, but Adoption Day program and reception open to the public.
Gratiot	Clinton County Courthouse 100 East State Street St. Johns 48879 in the Board of Commissioners Room on the second floor	2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	Jean Rayman (989) 224-5190 Carolyn Delavan (989) 224-5197	Adoption finalization hearings and reception open to the public.
Hillsdale	Hillsdale County Courthouse 29 North Howell Street, 2nd Floor Hillsdale 49242	9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.	Hon. Michael E. Nye (517) 437-4643	Adoption finalization hearings and reception open to the public.
Ingham	Veterans Memorial Courthouse 313 West Kalamazoo Street, 2nd Floor Courtroom 3 Lansing 48933	1:30 p.m.-2:45 p.m.	Becky McCormick (517) 483-6438	Court of Appeals Judge Donald S. Owens to attend. Informational Open House on the first floor. Reception to

County	Event Location	Time	Court Contact	Additional Comments
				follow the adoption finalization hearings. All of the day's events are open to the public.
Ionia	Ionia County Courthouse 100 West Main Street Ionia 48846	11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.	Kathleen Wright (616) 527-5326	Adoption finalization hearings closed to the public.
Iosco	Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona Educational Service District Building 2118 US-23-South Alpena 49707	1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Jean Peirce (989) 354-7268	DHS Adoption Information Fair will be held Saturday November 19. Coverage area includes Alcona, Alpena, Iosco and Presque Isle counties.
Isabella	Isabella County Trial Court 300 North Main Street Mount Pleasant 48858	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	Laura Plachta (989) 772-0911 ext. 276	Adoption finalization hearings may be open to the public. Reception open to the public.
Jackson	Jackson County Courthouse 312 South Jackson Street Jackson 49201	9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	Terralyn Brown (517) 768-2776	Court of Appeals Chief Judge William C. Whitbeck to attend the morning event. Adoption finalization hearings may be open to the public.
Kalamazoo	Crosstown Center 150 East Crosstown Parkway Kalamazoo 49001	9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	Mary Haskamp (269) 384-8178	Supreme Court Chief Justice Clifford W. Taylor to attend. Adoption finalization hearings begin at 11:00 a.m. Information Room, two panel discussions and a reception. All of the day's events are open to the public.
Lenawee			David Stanifer (517) 264-4622 James G. Criste (517) 264-6447	State Court Administrative Office Child Welfare Services Director Kathryne O'Grady to attend.
Livingston	Livingston County Judicial Center 204 South Highlander Way Howell 48843	1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Gerry Glenn (517) 540-7760	Adoption finalization hearings may be open to the public.
Mackinac			Judith Ryerse (906) 643-7303	Mackinac County Adoption Day event will be held on November 21.

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Macomb	Macomb County Court Building 40 North Main Street 3rd Floor Mount Clemens 48043	9:30 a.m.-noon	Michael Hester (586) 469-5382	Supreme Court Justice Maura D. Corrigan to attend. Adoption finalization hearings open to the public.
Marquette	Ashman Court Marriott Hotel 111 West Main Street Midland 48640	9:30 a.m.-noon	Hon. Dorene S. Allen (989) 832-6880	Judge Anderegg is one of the panelists at the Protecting Children, Promoting Permanent Families panel discussion on Monday November 21.
Midland	Midland County Courthouse 301 West Main Street 2nd Floor Midland 48640 in Hon. Paul J. Clulo's courtroom	10:00 a.m.-noon	Susan C. Burdick (989) 832-6869	Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly and Congressman Dave Camp to attend. Adoption Day program followed by adoption finalization hearings and reception. All of the day's events are open to the public.
Muskegon	Michael E. Kobza Hall of Justice 990 Terrace Street Muskegon 49442	1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Marianne Fleese (231) 724-6323	Adoption finalization hearings may be open to the public.
Oakland	Oakland County Courthouse 1200 North Telegraph Road Pontiac 48341	8:30 a.m.-noon	Lauran Howard (248) 858-0038	Supreme Court Justice Maura D. Corrigan to attend. Coffee and juice served beginning at 8:30 a.m. outside the commissioner's auditorium. Arthur Eugene Moore Champion of Children Award presentation begins at 9:00 a.m. Reception to follow the adoption finalization hearings in the second floor conference room. All of the day's events are open to the public.
Oscoda (con't on next page)	Oscoda County Courthouse Courthouse Annex	8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	Cindy Masterson (989) 826-1107	Informational Open House Only.

County	Event Location	Time	Court Contact	Additional Comments
	105 South Court Street Mio 48647			
Otsego	Otsego County Courthouse 800 Livingston Blvd. Courtroom 101 Gaylord 49735	11:00 a.m.-noon	Julie Chudzinski (989) 731-0204	Otsego County Adoption Day event was held on Tuesday November 15.
Ottawa	Ottawa County Courthouse 12120 Fillmore Street West Olive 49460	8:30 a.m.-noon	Betty Claar (616) 786-4138	Adoption finalization hearings and reception open to the public.
Presque Isle	Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona Educational Service District Building 2118 US-23-South Alpena 49707	1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Jean Peirce (989) 354-7268	DHS Adoption Information Fair will be held Saturday November 19. Coverage area includes Alcona, Alpena, Iosco and Presque Isle counties.
Saginaw	Jerome T. Hart State Office Building 411 East Genesee Street Saginaw 48607	11:00 a.m.	Ann Shea (989) 758-1859	Adoption finalization hearings closed to the public.
St. Clair	St. Clair County Courthouse 201 McMorran Blvd. Port Huron 48060	9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.	Pamela May (810) 985-2183	Adoption finalization hearings open to the public.
St. Joseph	St. Joseph County Courts Building 125 West Main Street Courtroom B Centreville 49032	9:00 a.m.-noon	Eva Sylvester (269) 467-5537	Reception to follow the adoption finalization hearings in the lower level of the Courts Building. Adoption finalization hearings and reception open to the public.
Shiawassee	Shiawassee County Courthouse 110 East Mack Street Corunna 48817	2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	Karen Van Epps (989) 743-2372	Informational Open House and Reception. Adoption finalization hearings closed to the public.
Washtenaw (con't on next page)	Washtenaw County Trial Court 101 East Huron Street Ann Arbor 48107	10:00 a.m.-noon	Monica Ireland Hicks (734) 222-6938	Court of Appeals Judge Kurtis T. Wilder and DHS Director Marianne Udow to attend.

County	Event Location	Time	Court Contact	Additional Comments
				<p>Adoption finalization hearings begin at 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Adoption Day program begins at 11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Reception during the adoption finalization hearings.</p> <p>All of the day's events are open to the public.</p>
Wayne	Coleman A. Young Municipal Center Two Woodward Avenue Room 701 Detroit 48226	9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	Denise Fitzhugh (313) 833-0354 Eva Reyes (313) 224-8220	<p>Supreme Court Justice Maura D. Corrigan to attend.</p> <p>Adoption Day program begins at 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Adoption finalization hearings begin at 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>Reception during the adoption finalization hearings.</p> <p>All the day's events are open to the public.</p>

***5 additional counties conducted adoptions that were not publicized, open to the public or had events on a different date**

Adoption Facts

- The goal of Michigan's Adoption Services Program is to place children in permanent homes through adoption as quickly as possible following termination of parental rights.
- Whenever possible, these placements are with families that already have an existing relationship or attachment to the child (relatives and foster parents) where siblings are placed together in an adoptive home.
- Financial support and/or medical subsidy may be provided to adoptive families through the Adoption Subsidy Program to encourage the placement of eligible children who have been in Michigan's foster care program.

During Fiscal Year 2004

- There were 2,684 adoptions finalized through DHS offices and private adoption agencies.
- More than 300 adoptions were finalized on Nov. 23 during Michigan's second annual Adoption Day 2004.
- Ninety-three percent of the children were adopted by a relative or foster parent.
- Seventy-nine percent were adopted with at least one sibling.
- Approximately 6,200 children in the DHS foster care system have parental rights terminated.
- Approximately 4,500 of the children in foster care have a goal of adoption. The remaining are either older youths who are satisfied with their placement and do not wish to be adopted (those 14 years of age and older have that option) or youth with other living arrangements where adoption is not appropriate.

How it works

- The Adoption Services Program provides services to children whose parental rights have been terminated due to child abuse or neglect and to families who want to adopt.
- Services are provided either directly by local DHS office adoption staff or through adoption purchase of service contracts with approximately 50 private Michigan child-placing agencies.
- Children receiving adoption services are in foster care and may have needs that make finding an appropriate adoptive home more challenging – they are older children, a member of a racial or ethnic minority, part of a sibling group that should be placed together, or they have physical, mental or emotional impairments.
- The Adoption Services Division is responsible for adoption, adoption contract management, the adoption subsidy and medical subsidy programs, Central Adoption Registry and the Michigan Children's Institute (MCI).

Barriers to Adoption

Children available are permanent state wards that cannot return to their birth home. These children often have social or psychological needs as a result of being victims of abuse and neglect. They may be emotionally guarded and apprehensive about accepting placement in an adoptive home. Children may be older and/or have siblings with whom they should be adopted or maintain contact. Families wishing to adopt children from the foster care system need to be prepared to face the challenges of providing permanency in a nurturing environment. This division is currently researching options for post adoption services including developing and implementing plans to assist adoption families.

For more information

- For more information on **Michigan Adoption Day** go to this Internet Web site: www.courts.michigan.gov/supremecourt/Press/MichiganAdoptionDayIndex.htm
- For more information on **children awaiting adoption in Michigan** go to www.mare.org
- For more information on **children awaiting adoption in the U.S.** go to www.adoptUSkids.org
- For more information on **public adoption policies and data** go to www.michigan.gov/dhs and click on "Adoption"
- For more information on **National Adoption Day** go to www.nationaladoptionday.com